19: Howell & Thomson E, G-5 (1943-1944) 1946
FJ23 Shilluk FJ23

643 of the new *reth* would follow still later. It was thought that the time
766 of the early maturing grain was the time to hold it. But the *reth* elect and responsible advisers seemed to think it should be got over quickly; maybe the general quickening tempo of life had something to do with it. It may, and we think this more likely, be due to a desire to get all the ceremonial over without undue delay. For the *reth* had been elected without a fight, and the Shilluk were so pleased that he had been chosen without violence, or the taint of being a government nominee, that they wanted the period of uncertainty cut down as far as possible.

The attendance at the funeral dance was said to be a reflexion on the prestige and the popularity of the late *reth*. This would be an interesting gauge, for the last time, of the esteem in which Fafiti had been held by his people to the end. His prestige had gone through
643 various vicissitudes. He had from the beginning suffered from being a government nominee, and the opposition of the southern Shilluk
[668] to his appointment, muted by government action, prevented his obtaining a willing and personal ascendancy over them for many years. As soon as his authority was complete, there followed a period of famine in the early 30's and the attempt by Nyawelo the son of
[669] *reth* Kur to assassinate him. This attempt would probably have been successful but for government intervention.

Again in 1936, Fafiti became ill, and the future for the Shilluk was once more clouded. He recovered however, and during his last years his influence throughout the Shilluk country was great, and he was held in high esteem by all his subjects.

Near the time of the funeral wake, the Shilluk chiefs and with their
766 men began to collect bulls for driving to Golbainy to be slaughtered for the dance. There was no compulsion on anyone to do this, but
[626] public opinion required that those who could, should help according to their means. On the whole the pressure of public opinion was more insistent upon those who lived near than upon those who lived farther away.